PROCEEDINGS OF A COUNCIL

WITH THE OTTAWA, OJIBWE,

AND WINNEBAGO

AT FORT DRUMMOND,

7 JULY 1818

E-Mail: sugarbushb@gmail.com

[Proceedings of a Council with the Ottawa, Chippewa and Winibago at Fort Drummond, 7 July 1818, MG 19, F 34, Series 2, lot 739, LAC.]

The Ottaways, Chipawas and Winibago Indians assembled at Drummonds Island requested to hold a Council accordingly, about 350 men were seated in front of Lieu[t] Col M[c]Kay the Superintendants Marquis—

Cap[t]. Jos DeLahay 70[th] Reg[t] Commdg & President
Lieut Col Will. M[c]Kay Superintendant
Lieu[t]. J. Austin 70[th]. Reg[t].
Lieu[t]. W. Taylor
Moses White H.A.—
T.G. Anderson In[dian] Dept.
L[t]. L.S Johnston
D. Mitchell Surgeon
Interp[r]. S[t]. Germain
— Assiganac
— A[mable]. Dusang
M[r] Thomas Truc[?] Store K. Gen[l]. Dep[t].
M[r] — Patten

The Chiefs Aid de Camp laying down a Braid wampum belt made in 1764 one made in 1786 and one marked L[t]. Col R[t]. M[c]Douall Comdg Michilimackinac with the pipe of peace marked on it—

Ocaitau Speaker—

Father

Your children now seated round you salute you sincerely- they intend to talk to you a great deal and beg you will listen to them with patience for they intend to open their hearts to you. (explain their sentiments)

Father-

When the Great Master of life first made us he sat us down on the Ottawas Island (an Island in Lake Huron) we were then all White (pure) we then were unacquainted with the whites and did not value Guns, Gun Powder, or Rum, we were then independent & lived happy in our natural state—

Father-

Our Ancestors one day in looking towards the rising Sun saw people of a different Colour to them selves and not long after they (the French) stretched out their hands to us, supplied them with Goods, we were delighted at the appearance of these Strangers they treated us well and offered to become our relations (to live in their Country) we consented, and soon after they kindled a fire at Old Michilimackinac (built a Fort) and call'd us their Children they told us we should never be in want or miserable with them that they would always give us good supplies and furnish us with Traders, they did so my Father they never told us a lie, neither did they ever deceive us—

Father-

While we were living in this happy state you was [sic] at play (war) with our Father he desired us to join and assist him in keeping you out of our Country. Our Ancestors obliged but not withstanding our assistance you beat the French drove them off our lands and took us under your Own (made peace with them)

My Father-

On making peace you promised to treat us with the same attention that the French had done, that we should receive a bounty annually of fine things that would make us comfortable and happy- you also told us your breasts would never be dry but that we should have plenty of milk (rum)—

Father-

Sometime after you had got guestly seated on our lands a neighbouring nation of ours acted like fools (when the Chipawas cut off the Garrison of Michilimackinac) they kill'd the Greater part of your Soldiers then at Mackinac the surviving ones my Father we collected together and took care of them, we went to the Green Bay brought away all your Soldiers and delivered them safe in a strong place (Montreal) Our Father at Montreal was delighted at our Conduct returned us many thanks and said he would again build a fire (a fort) and plant a tree on our lands that would never die tho' the bark would be taken off (a Flag staff) and that round the tree you would raise a strong hill (a fortification) all this my Father has Come to pass your words have been true, your words were Smooth and pleasuring. Holding the belt of 1764. This my Ancestors received from our Father Sir W. Johnson

Father-

You sent word to all your red children to assemble at the Crooked Place (Niagara they all heard your voice) obeyed the message & the next Summer met you at that place, you then laid this Belt on a mat and Said- Children you must all touch this belt of Peace, I touch it myself that we may all be brethren (united) and hope our friendship will never cease, I will call you my Children will send warmth (presents) to your Country and your families shall never be in Want, look towards the rising Sun, my nation is as briliant [sic] as it, and its word cannot be violated—

Father-

Your words were true all your promises came to pass on giving us this belt of Peace you said if you should ever require my assistance shew this Belt and my hand will be immediately. I streched [sic] forth to help you here the Speaker laid down the belt and took up eight strings of white Wampum.

Father-

Listen with attention to what I tell you it is the Voice of my Chiefs and the Ottawas Nation not long ago you sent for us at S^{t} Josephs and spoke to us with a strong voice (intreated) we never till that moment hesitated to obey your Orders but my Father something whispered in our ears that it would be good policy for us to sleep during the war (remain neutral) and cultivate our lands for the support and comfort of our own families— But my Father when one of your warriors (Cap^{t} Roberts) told us it was for our good and that you never would make peace with them till you would drive them over the Mississippi, then you would make a large road (boundary) that would divide them from us, that they should never be allowed to step over it, and that when you would make peace all your red Children that would join you

should be consulted and included as your sincerest friends (allies) at the same time that you implored our assistance, you won the influence of some of our sensible Chiefs who talked to us incessantly till with on Voice (unanimously) we raised the hatchet and made the Americans run out of their fort (Mackinac)

Father-

We were not anxious to raise the hatchet for fear the Americans would be too strong for you and in that case we would lose your Support and be oblidged [sic] to fight them ourselves in defence of our Women & Children and to prevent their taking from us the lands, that the Great Master of Life planted us on, but knowing your words to be the breath of truth we Seized the hatchet, painted our faces and made the Woods echo with the War Song-

Father

Tho' many of our young men were mixed with the earth (kill'd) we were happy and took to your Chiefs the hair off a great many of the enemies heads and tho' we were enjoying ourselves and every thing going on well, we were astonished one morning (spring) to hear by a little bird (a messenger) that you had buried the hatchet (made peace) and taken our enemies by the hand—

Father-

We of course supposed the enemy had been crying over your heads (imploring) to be Charitable to them to make peace and save their lives, we were glad to hear the news not doubting but that all you had told us was now coming to pass—

Father

My heart now fails me I can hardly speak we are slaves and are treated worse than dogs those bad Spirits (Americans) take possession of our lands without consulting us, they deprived us of our English Traders they even tie us and torture us almost [to] death (flog them)

Father

Our Chiefs did not consent to have their Lands given up to the Americans but you did it my Father without even consulting us and in doing that you delivered us up to their mercy they are enraged at us for having joined you in the play (war) and they treat us worse than dogs-

Father

We implore you to open your ears, listen to our grievances, fulfill your promises that we may be released from Slavery and enjoy the Happiness we did previous to the war—

Father

The Great Master of Life made the water, the land, Deer, fish and the Birds, for the good of mankind you are our Great Father placed by the Master of Life to watch over us, you can make us enjoy those things, we therefore implore you to take pity on us and allow us to enjoy what the Great Master of Life made for us all—

Father-

When you abandoned Mackinac you promised we would at this fine [fire?] place (Drummonds Island) receive every thing we could wish for to make us comfortable, until this year your words have been true we have now come a great distance and all return nearly empty handed—

Father-

You M^{c}Kay, it is to you our chiefs speak, they request you to put our parole in a fair road to reach our new Father at Quebec and a [?] that an answer may be sent then this fall, they have already sent several paroles, representing their situation but they have not been listened to, the paroles have been asleep— If a deaf ear is turned to this, the Chiefs and Warriors say they will go to Quebec themselves next Spring and talk loud (explain their Sentiments personally) and if they should not be listened to, or should the store doors be Shut against us, we Indians will find the means to open them and be heard (go to England)

Father,

What we have said is not intended to offend you, we have merely reminded you of your promises and told you our grievances— Here the Speaker gave the Wampum and Made a Question—

Father—

Should some of our people be, (in the fall), employed gathering their Corn and not able to come for their presents could you not have their clothing sent to them by some of their relations that come here—

Father

Return thanks to the Great Master of Life for having afforded us a fine day to speak to our G^{r} Father — Father I have been talking a long time and are quite thirsty Can't you give me a drop of milk — giving his hand to the Commanding Officers I most Sincerely shake you by the hand, as a representative of our Great Father — I have nothing else to say—

Reply by the Commanding officer

Children

I have listened with patience & attention to your Speech, and I will do all in my power to have it laid before the Commander of the Forces, who I am Certain will do everything that is right and just for you—

Answer by the Superintendant-

Children

I have listened to attention to what you have said, I am well aware of the truth of your discourse and will use my endeavours to comply with your request-

Your parroles ought to go through your father Col Claus to the Commander of the Forces, but as you request me to ask for an Answer this fall I will send a copy of it by a Trader that goes off to morrow to Sir John Johnson who will lay it before your new Father at Quebec

Children—

For my own part I again promise you faithfully to use every effort to assist you- you all know that during the War I marched night and day, Winter & Sumer to have what had been promised you, fulfilled and since the War I have never Slept, all this I have done on your accounts, But every year you so load me with reproaches that I can no longer bear the burden and I have not Some good news to tell you next Spring I will not Come here—

Children—

You asked me for milk when you embarked I will put a bottle (keg) into your Canoes- I cannot send presents to any of my Children that may remain in their villages unless your Father at Quebec orders me to do So—

Certified

Drummonds Island 7th July 1818—
Wm.cKay
Supt. In. affairs DI
Lt. Col. M. Fencibles

Figure 19. Charles Stadden, *Field Officer of the British Indian Department in full dress*, painting, Parks Canada.

Figure 20. Levi Stevens, *Colonel William McKay*, 1816, painting, McCord Stewart Museum, M17684.